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WILD LIFE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

ENTRANCE TO PENN'S CAVE

WILD LIFE IN WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

By many a cairn and trenched mound,
Where chiefs of yore sleep lone and sound,
And springs, where grey-haired shepherds tell,
That still the fairies love to dwell.
—Sir Walter Scott

By HENRY W. SHOEMAKER

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INTRODUCTION

THE purpose in presenting this little volume of traditions and observations of life in the wilds of Pennsylvania is, if possible, to awaken an interest among the residents of the state in the folklore and legends in which this section of country abounds, and perhaps be the means of inspiring one better qualified than I am to adequately set forth these interesting tales in readable form.

How much less picturesque the Hudson Valley would be were it not for the romantic charm given it by the writings of Washington Irving, or how prosaic the New England States become without the marvelous tales of Hawthorne. It is with such thoughts I have prepared this book, hoping that the seed thus planted may reap fruit from other hands.

As a goodly percentage of the characters outlined in these Pennsylvania stories are still living, or have near relatives who might take offense at the publicity accorded them, I have transposed several

of the names of persons and places. Otherwise, I believe I have followed the traditions as I have heard them from the old settlers.

The first story in the book, "The Legend of Penn's Cave," was told me when I was twelve years old, in 1892, by an aged Seneca Indian named Isaac Steele, who visited McElhattan that year while I was summering there. I well remember him; above medium height, squarely built, with strong aquiline features and long white hair hanging down to his broad shoulders. He said that he was eighty-three years old and that he had once roamed over the wilds of Clinton County. He had come back to the scenes of his childhood for a final look and when I made his acquaintance he was on his way to New York State via the "Pipe Line." The various Indian names are purely fictitious, as I transcribed the story from memory for the first time a few days ago. I go into these particulars to show the way I have acquired this collection of motley facts and fables and only hope that they will give the reader a small percentage of the pleasure they have given

me during the rambles in which I learned most of them.

I wish to sincerely thank the mountaineers and others who, often at much loss of time to themselves, have recounted to me the tales of days gone by and thus enabled me to make this book a reality.

HENRY W. SHOEMAKER.

New York, January 8, 1903.

THE LEGEND OF PENN'S CAVE

IN the days when the West Branch Valley was a trackless wilderness of defiant pines and submissive hemlocks, twenty-five years before the first pioneer had attempted a permanent lodgement beyond Sunbury, a young Pennsylvania Frenchman from Lancaster County, named Malachi Boyer, alone and unaided, pierced the jungle to the point where Bellefonte is now located. The history of his travels has never been written, partly because he had no white companion to observe them, and partly because he himself was unable to write. His very identity would now be forgotten were it not for traditions of the Indians, with whose lives he became strangely entangled.

A short, stockily built fellow was Malachi Boyer, with unusually prominent black eyes, and black hair that hung in ribbon-like strands over his broad, low forehead. Fearless, yet conciliatory, he escaped a thousand times from Indian cunning and treachery,

and as the months went by and he penetrated further into the forests he numbered many redskins among his cherished friends.

Why he explored these boundless wilds he could not explain, for it was not in the interest of science, as he scarcely knew of such a thing as geography, and it was not for trading, as he lived by the way. But on he forced his path, ever aloof from his own race, on the alert for the strange scenes which encompassed him day by day.

One beautiful Springtime, there is no one who can tell the exact year, found Malachi Boyer camped on the shores of Spring Creek. Near the Mammoth Spring was an Indian camp whose occupants maintained a quasi-intercourse with the pale-faced stranger. Sometimes old Chief O-ko-cho would bring gifts of corn to Malachi, who in turn presented the chieftain with a hunting knife of truest steel. And in this way Malachi came to spend more and more of his time about the Indian camps, only keeping his distance at night and during religious ceremonies.

Old O-ko-cho's chief pride was centered in his

seven stalwart sons, Hum-kin, Ho-ko-lin, Too-chin, Os-tin, Chaw-kee-bin, A-ha-kin, Ko-lo-pa-kin, and his Diana-like daughter, Nita-nee. The seven brothers resolved themselves into a guard of honor for their sister, who had many suitors, among whom was the young chief, E-Faw, from the adjoining sub-tribe of the A-caw-ko-taws. But Nita-nee gently though firmly repulsed her numerous suitors, until such time as her father should give her in marriage to one worthy of her regal blood.

Thus ran the course of Indian life when Malachi Boyer made his bed of hemlock boughs by the gurgling waters of Spring Creek. And it was the first sight of her, washing a deer skin in the stream, that led him to prolong his stay and ingratiate himself with her father's tribe.

Few were the words which passed between Malachi and Nita-nee, many the glances, and often did the handsome pair meet in the mossy ravines near the camp grounds. But this was all clandestine love, for friendly as Indian and white might be in social intercourse, never could a marriage be tolerated,

until—there always is a turning point in romance—the black-haired wanderer and the beautiful Nita-nee resolved to spend their lives together, and one moonless night started for the more habitable east. All night long they threaded their silent way, climbing the mountain ridges, gliding through the velvet soiled hemlock glades, and wading, hand in hand, the splashing, resolute torrents. When morning came they breakfasted on dried meat and huckleberries, and bathed their faces in a mineral spring. Until—there always is a turning point in romance—seven tall, stealthy forms, like animated mountain pines, stepped from the gloom and surrounded the eloping couple. Malachi drew a hunting knife, identical with the one he had given to Chief O-ko-cho, and seizing Nita-nee around the waist, stabbed right and left at his would-be captors. The first stroke pierced Hum-kin's heart, and uncomplaining he sank down dying. The six remaining brothers, although all received stab wounds, caught Malachi in their combined grasp and disarmed him; then one brother held sobbing Nita-nee, while the others dragged the

fighting Malachi across the mountain. That was the last the lovers saw of one another. Below the mountain lay a broad valley, from the center of which rose a circular hillock, and it was to this mound the savage brothers led their victim. As they approached, a yawning cavern met their eyes, filled with greenish limestone water. There is a ledge at the mouth of the cave, about six feet higher than the water, above which the arched roof rises thirty feet, and it was from here they shoved Malachi Boyer into the tide below. He sank for a moment, but when he rose to the surface, commenced to swim. He approached the ledge but the brothers beat him back, so he turned and made for some dry land in the rear of the cavern. Two brothers ran from the entrance over the ridge to where there is another small opening, but though Malachi tried his best, in the impenetrable darkness he could not find this or any other avenue of escape. He swam back to the cave's mouth, but the merciless Indians were still on guard. He climbed up again and again, but was repulsed, and once more retired to the dry cave. Every day

for a week he renewed his efforts of escape, but the brothers were never absent. Hunger became unbearable, his strength gave way but he vowed he would not let the redskins see him die, so forcing himself into one of the furthermost labyrinths, Malachi Boyer breathed his last.

Two days afterward the brothers entered the cave and discovered his body. They touched not the coins in his pockets, but weighted him with stones and dropped him into the deepest part of the greenish limestone water. And after these years those who have heard this legend declare that on the still Summer nights an unaccountable echo rings through the cave which sounds like "Nita-nee, Nita-nee!"

OLE BULL'S CASTLE

I LEFT the railroad at the lively little city of Cross Forks, and followed the mountainous valley of Kettle Creek towards the former home of the world-famous violinist, Ole Bull. Here and there neatly fenced farms were sprinkled among the rugged peaks, but as the valley became narrower, and the mountains higher, the scene became one of desolation rather than cultivation.

Very little of the hemlock forests remained, the mills and railroads of Cross Forks having done their share towards desolating the valley. At last, as I came around a bend in the stream, and likewise in the road, I saw before me, on the summit of one of the highest peaks, the jagged ruins of what appeared to be a mediæval castle. The bright August sun glistened on the gray stone walls and parapets, and above all, under the canopy of the cloudless sky, soared an eagle in his solemn grandeur. Never, I thought, had the harmonies of

nature united themselves better than on the site of Ole Bull's Castle. But there was one element which by some might be thought discordant; on the steep sides of the mountain on which the castle stands worked half a hundred woodsmen, their blue and red shirts in bold relief to the dark green of the hemlock forest they were destroying. The click, click of the axes, the wheezing of the crosscut saws, and the rattle of the cant hooks producing a strange contrast to the otherwise oppressive stillness of the scene. Returning to the mediæval simile, one could almost imagine these gaily bedecked woodsmen as the home guard of the lord of the manor, throwing up fortifications on the mountain side to repulse the assault of some hostile force.

The part of the mountain which they had already denuded stood thick with hemlock stumps, peeled clean of thick bark, and shining pink-white in the sunlight like rows upon rows of tombstones in the graveyard of the ages. And the freshly peeled glistening logs, piled one on another, in seeming regular order, reminded me of the coat of mail on

the capacious breast of some mighty warrior of the Middle Ages!

I climbed the steep mountain, pausing every few minutes to enjoy the fresh panorama which opened before me, and when I reached the castle grounds, the view stretched in boundless immensity in every direction; range after range of dark green, light green, blue and brown mountains could be seen to the north, the south, the east, and the west. Thin white columns of smoke, which rose from distant ravines, betokened the presence of steam saw mills.

I could not but admire the taste of Ole Bull in selecting this sublime spot for a mountain home, far from the turmoils of the valley, like the philosopher in Sartor Resartus.

Of the castle itself but three walls remain, the tallest being nearest the precipitous cliff, and from whose windows the occupants could have looked down a sheer descent of five hundred feet to where Kettle Creek winds about like a thread of silver fresh from the smelter. Across the ravine is another mountain, as steep, but not as high as the

one on which the castle is located, which rises majestically up with its uneven cliffs and graveyard of hemlock stumps. The ravine is strangely reminiscent of the pictures of the Colorado Canyon we have seen in our geographies, and later on railroad posters, but from what I know of the west, the ravine of Kettle Creek, at least in Ole Bull's time, was far more beautiful, for what it lacked in depth, was more than recompensed by the dense foliage which grew in a tangle on the rugged sides, a glorious gift of nature which no western landscape can boast.

THE BALD EAGLE SILVER MINE

THE legend of a silver mine of fabulous richness hidden somewhere in the Bald Eagle Mountains between Pine and Anghaubaugh Stations has had for over fifty years a remarkable fascination for the ne'er-do-wells, soldiers of fortune and "divining rod" men of this section of country.

Up to thirty years ago, small bands of Indians, claiming to hail from the New York State Reservations, were in the habit of camping every Fall at the confluence of Pine Creek and the Susquehanna River, not far from the town of Jersey Shore. Ostensibly there for the selling of beautifully woven baskets and trinkets, the more suspicious of their white neighbors ascribed to them an entirely different purpose, for on dark nights these Indians would hurriedly cross the river in canoes, with lanterns muffled in blankets, and climb up the mountain which rises precipitously from the opposite bank. By the lights they could be followed to the sum-

mit, where they kept moving about until daybreak. On several occasions the redskins were shadowed by local busybodies, but were always discovered by the Indians' outposts. Lights would be instantly extinguished, and the Indians would disappear in the darkness, leaving their eavesdroppers more mystified than ever. The whites still held to their belief that it was treasure the Indians were after, as farmers in the upper Pine Creek valley, who had met the savages on their homeward trips to the Reservations, declared that they carried bags of pure silver, which they showed to whites, whom at rare intervals they took into their confidence, but persistently refused to tell the location of the mines.

One or two Pennsylvanians, who had lumbered near the Cattaraugus Reservation in western New York, met traders from Buffalo, who said they had bought silver from certain Indians who were recognized as having been in the vicinity of the Bald Eagles.

In Lock Haven until recently lived a gentleman of wide culture, who became interested in the

fabled silver mine shortly after the Indians had ceased their yearly pilgrimages. His geological knowledge told him that it was possible for pockets of silver to be present on these highlands, so in a spirit of adventure he paid a visit to the Cattaraugus Reservation. After diligent inquiries he learned that of all the Indians who had been to Pennsylvania, but one, an aged squaw, remained. However, she was too feeble to make another journey. By liberal gifts of money, and promises of further rewards, he finally induced this old woman to draw a diagram of the location of the mines, which she described as a cavern which led a hundred feet into the body of the mountain, where progress was barred by walls of the purest silver.

Armed with this map, the Lock Haven would-be Monte Christo hurried back to the Bald Eagles as fast as the Seashore Express could carry him. Out on the mountain he went, expecting to find the mine in less than a day's search. But disappointment awaited him, though he found the landmarks, a dead yellow pine, and a pile of stones thrown up

in pyramid shape. Then he hired two countrymen to aid him, with no better success.

After a month's fruitless search he engaged an engineer and a surveyor from Williamsport, but they too failed utterly. Goaded to a point of "do or die" he again visited the Reservation, but in the meantime the old squaw had died, on her deathbed leaving the secret to her half-breed grandson, Billy Douty. The half-breed was positive he could find the treasure-trove if some one would pay his expenses to Pine, which proposition was gladly accepted by the gentleman from Lock Haven. Billy landed in Pine Station at six o'clock one evening, refused any supper, and made straight for the lower mountain. "Me find before morning, me dead sure," he called back as he cut across lots.

Next morning he was back empty-handed and hungry, but not discouraged. He loaded himself with a stock of provisions and went out to the mountain, remaining night and day in all kinds of weather for three weeks. Occasionally in the stillness of midnight the ring of his pick could be heard

far away on the lonely summits. At last his patience gave way, and he abandoned the quest, saying, "River run wrong, Allegheny River run west, Susquehanna run east, me twisted." And to this day the silver mine of the Bald Eagles awaits a rediscoverer.

GRANNY MYERS' CURSE

THAT belief in witchcraft still exists in the United States cannot be denied, as the newspapers every now and then print accounts of the doings of alleged witches in remote parts of the country. But nowhere does it flourish and its teachings defy the advance of modern enlightenment to such an extent as in the mountains of western Pennsylvania.

A typical case of Pennsylvania witchcraft is that of an old Swiss, Christ by name, who tills a sixty-acre farm on a bleak mountain top along what is known as the "Pine Road," that runs from Jersey Shore to Loganton. His house stands back a hundred yards from the road. The original structure was built of logs, but as more prosperous days ensued, a frame mansion was "tacked" on the less imposing log cabin.

Not another house can be seen from the windows, which look over a dreary expanse of fire-swept summits, "slashings" and abandoned clearings. The

gable of the large barn, standing between the road and the house, is covered with bear paws, nailed in disorderly profusion. Several sets of buckhorns adorn the slanting roof of the nearby corncrib.

With such surroundings it is not surprising that people become prey to mental vagaries, and live in terror of persons possessing supposed supernatural powers.

Formerly Christ had his brother Michael, whose house was two miles up a secluded hemlock hollow, for "next door" neighbor, but alleged spirit rappings and apparitions, culminating in the suicide of an old man named Righter, who made his home with the family, caused Mike to move to a farm nearer town and neighbors.

At present, Christ's nearest neighbors are the family of an old woman whom we shall call Granny Myers, reputed among the mountaineers as a witch, and famed for the potency of her spells, who lives in a windowless shanty, three miles away.

One Fall, about ten years ago, some of Christ's cattle broke into the Myers buckwheat field, and one

was mysteriously shot. Threats of criminal prosecution were made, until one night Granny Myers strode into Christ's kitchen, and, in the presence of several witnesses, cursed the farmer, his wife and daughter in these words: "Christ, you shall shrivel to death with rheumatics, your woman shall develop a cancer, and your daughter shall cough up blood till she fades away." Then she went out, slamming the door after her, leaving the Christs in a state of nervous collapse.

Several months passed by; it was the month of February, the Pine Road was deep in snow and not even a shingle-sled could navigate, but a little thing like this could not daunt old John Dice, the witch doctor from the river bottom, who, clad in his familiar coat of Confederate gray, knee deep in slush, was bound for a vendue in the east end of Sugar Valley.

As he passed the Christ farm, a withered figure hobbled to the fence, and waved his hand at him. "Shon, come here," he called. "My woman is dying mit der cancer, my girl is coughing up blood and I'm dying mit der rheumatiz."

The witch doctor climbed the gate and followed the farmer to his house. Mrs. Christ, complaining of terrible pains in her side, lay moaning on a sofa, and the nineteen-year-old daughter, worn almost to a skeleton, dragged herself about the house, coughing every few minutes.

"Granny Myers done it," was all they would say. The witch doctor, who understood the trouble at a glance, promised to have the spell removed within the week, and before an hour was at the hut of the alleged witch.

On his way, in a snow covered lot, he noticed four miserable horses huddled together, protecting themselves as best they could from the cruel Winter wind. All told they had but two eyes and one good tail among them, these cast-offs from the dispersal sale of the Williamsport Traction Company—now operated by trolley.

Granny Myers, a tall, rawboned woman with a long nose and enormous hands, was smoking her clay pipe by the stove, when her old enemy, who never knocked, came in, shaking the snow from his boots.

"Go over to Christ's and tell them you have taken that spell off, or, mark my word, it's now Friday, by next Monday your four horses will be dead, and you will follow them."

That was all John Dice said before he resumed his tramp to the vendue. The next Monday, true to his promise, he appeared at Granny Myers' door, a scythe and a poleaxe, purchased at the vendue, slung over his massive shoulders. Granny heard his footsteps and was on hand to meet him.

"You old deil," said she, "meh crowbates are all four dead, and I wus to Christ's a' yesterday."

When the witch doctor revisited the Christ kitchen a vastly different scene met his eyes. Christ, humming to himself, was mending a rocking-chair; his smiling wife was lifting a heavy kettle from the stove, while his buxom daughter was setting the tea table.

"Vont you stay to supper Shon," said Christ, "the old hex's taken off the spell, an' we're ahl well again."

WITCHCRAFT vs. MOTHER-IN-LAW

GRANNY MYERS had a daughter who was "mahried" to Jakey Welshans, a small storekeeper in the German Settlement. The old woman would tie up her bundle and wend her way over the hills and make protracted visits to her daughter, often lasting a year at a time, much to the disgust of Jakey. On one of these visits, when she had created turmoil among the Welshans' for eleven months and showed no signs of going home, Jakey hit upon the scheme of enlisting the aid of John Dice in ridding his household of the disturbing mother-in-law. So one day he met John, who was electioneering for a Republican candidate (John is a Democrat), and told him of his unhappy predicament. "Der old voman is awful scaret of you, Shon, ever sence you kilt them horses on her, and, if you tell her somethin' bad may come to her, she'll light oud preddy quick."

"All right," said John, "let's tend to her case now."

"Der old voman is a great lisdener, Shon," continued Jakey, "and if you talks kinder loud on der porch, she'll be peekin' through der keyhole." Arriving at the Welshans' store they walked around to the side porch, ostensibly to give John a drink from the well. A hasty glance through the kitchen window showed Granny Myers standing inside the closed kitchen door.

"I'm down on that infernal mother-in-law of yours," said John in his loudest tones, "and she'd better be going home soon or——"

"Oh, don't speak like dot, Shon, she's a loafly woman," interposed son-in-law Jakey.

"I mean what I say," said John, "I have no use for that old hex, and she'd better clear out, for if she doesn't, within twenty-four hours her blood will dry in her veins and she'll die standing up." Then John got his drink of well water and resumed his electioneering for the Republican candidate. But his words had their effect. At the dinner table that day Granny said she "thought it was time to go home." All prevailed upon her to stay, even the children, but with no

avail. At half-past four the next morning she came downstairs with her bundle and started on her ten-mile walk across the mountains. And to this day Granny Myers has never revisited the German Settlement.

KILLING A PANTHER

ACCORDING to most authorities the panther is an extinct animal in Pennsylvania. The State Report on the "Diseases of Poultry, etc.," published in 1898, states that "the last one was killed by Seth Nelson, Jr., on the main fork of Beech Creek in 1893."

I have made a careful investigation of all the rumors favorable to the present existence of the panther in this state, as well as all authorities who claim its extinction. As a result I am inclined to believe that at the present time there are a few of these bloodthirsty animals ranging in Clearfield and Center Counties. And in this the commonwealth is unique, as the panther has long since vanished from the mountains of New York and the New England States. Likewise this state was the last eastern home of the elk, and from the most reliable sources I believe there are still a few wolves in the Keystone wildernesses.

A young man named Davis, from McElhattan, has favored me with an account of the killing of a large panther on Deer Creek, which occurred in the Autumn of 1895, fully two years after the "last one" was slain, according to state report.

Mr. Davis had been connected with a bark job in the Clearfield County mountains, and when the "peeling" season was over he started with three companions for Karthaus, to take the train for their respective homes. Among their assets were five fine hunting dogs.

For half a dozen miles their progress was uneventful, save when the dogs, for a little diversion, "holed" a groundhog or "tongued" a rabbit. In the pursuit of one of these "cottontails" the hounds got a long distance in front of their owners, so that their baying sounded as a faint echo. Suddenly, despite the interval of space, the yelping became unusually loud and continued, as if some large animal were being held at bay. The young men concluded it was only a black bear, which species abounded in this section, but nevertheless hurried

towards their dogs. At last from the brow of a steep hill whose sides were denuded of all timber that might obstruct the view, they saw the dogs below in the hollow frantically leaping and howling about an enormous white oak. Far out on a projecting limb, almost as thick as the trunk itself, crouched a huge, tawny animal, its long tail hanging from the limb, a bait to goad the hounds to greater fury. Sometimes in their frantic leaps the dogs would almost seize the tail in their teeth but it was just out of reach, and they gave vent to their disappointment in choruses of the most hideous howling. The panther never uttered a sound, but sat motionless, eyeing his tormenters.

One of the young men, Waters by name, had an excellent rifle, and, followed by his companions, clambered down the brushy hillside. At proper distance the gunner halted, aimed and fired, the bullet taking effect. A piercing cry rang from the panther, as with convulsive efforts it slid from the oak branch, tearing off the bark in great strips as it fell. Right on the dogs it dropped, and in the fury

of its wound, commenced the annihilation of the faithful canines. Blood flowed in every direction; a brindle dog, with its entrails hanging out, was tossed fifteen feet in the air, falling lifeless in a little creek nearby. Waters fired again, but the quick movements of the panther saved it a mortal wound, the bullet passing through the eyes of one of the hounds. Another dog dragged itself bleeding from the fray, but the panther sprang upon it, crushing the life out, and as another dog endeavored to save its companion, the panther crushed that one to earth with its paw. Waters watched his chance, and as the panther sprang for the remaining dog, he ran up and struck the savage beast a terrific blow on the back of the head with the butt end of his rifle. The panther dropped to earth upon the struggling hound. As the young men rained blows on its head with clubs, Waters took careful aim, and sent a bullet crashing through the panther's skull, which ended its murderous career. The dog was dragged from under its foe, but died in a few minutes.

OLD RIGHTER'S GHOST

NEARLY seventeen years have passed since the mysterious death of this old German, but the eyewitnesses of the phenomena leading up to the event still live, and vividly recall the occurrence.

Down in the Black Hollow, which lies between Sugar and Nippenose Valleys, stands a square frame house. It is now deserted, and time and neglect have reduced it to the most dilapidated condition. All the whitewash has gone, the windows have been removed, and but one chimney points menacingly to the solemn sky. A few peach trees in the kitchen garden still yield fruit, which brings the small boys of the adjacent clearings (but always in midday) to wander about the tenantless place.

Some years ago, on one of my rambles among the wilds, I happened upon this ancient house. I noted its superiority to the farmhouses of the locality, and wondered why it stood deserted. The house seemed extremely habitable, the rooms being large,

with open fireplaces, and the barn, which had been burned, to judge from the dimensions of the foundations, was equal to anything in the river bottom. When I reached McElhattan I eagerly inquired and was told the history of the Michael farm.

In 1886 considerable lumbering operations were being carried on by Lock Haven parties in the hollow, and a crew of seven or eight men, who were skidding logs, building slides and shanties, were boarding that Winter at the farmhouse. In addition to these woodsmen and the family of the farmer, there was an aged German named Righter. Whether he was a relative of the family, a dependent, or merely a paid boarder, the woodsmen never learned. But for some reason he enjoyed unusual privileges, his peculiarities being encouraged, it was thought, by the tolerance in which they were held. This old German was said to have a haunted mind, and it was impossible for him to sleep at night, the very approach of dusk sending him off into indescribable fits of terror and fear. Every evening six large kerosene lamps were placed in his bedroom, over the

"back kitchen," and all night long he would walk up and down the room, sometimes crying piteously. But at sunrise, he would throw open the shutters, extinguish the lamps, and lie down for a comfortable sleep which would last pretty nearly all day. He apparently came downstairs but for one meal, which was towards sundown, but the family left loaves of bread and crocks of milk in his room when he retired for his nocturnal struggles. Several woodsmen who slept below in the kitchen complained that his tramping and wailing kept them awake, but the farmer gave them the alternative of enduring it or leaving. He said his family had "gotten used to it, and others could too." Who this old man was, where he came from, and what ailed him was an unceasingly interesting topic of conversation among the naturally curious woodsmen. They tried to engage him in conversation, but could not even learn his first name, "Righter's my name," was all he would say.

When the first shadows would creep into the corners of the kitchen where this odd German spent his afternoons, he would jump up from his chair and

cry, "light der lamps, light der lamps." The children, who were well trained, would run upstairs and illuminate this room and close the shutters, then, preceded by a boy carrying a lighted candle, he would climb up the narrow, rickety stairs, lock and bolt his door, and commence his nightly tramp, tramp. This kept up all Winter long, until one evening in the month of April, at seven o'clock, a piercing shriek was heard from old Righter's room. The woodsmen, who were all in the kitchen, having just finished supper, ran up the back stairs to the room, and finding the door locked, pounded on it vigorously.

Then a child's voice was heard from below, "Here comes Daddy Righter now," and the sound of feet could be heard on the front stairs. Some of the men rushed downstairs again, and toward the front door, while others continued battering down the door to the recluse's room.

Those who came down saw a remarkable sight, for with leisurely tread, Righter could be seen coming down the front stairs, a smile playing over his distorted features. The men looked at him aghast.

He slowly opened the front door and walked across the yard to the front gate, leaving his footprints on the soft, muddy path. When the men recovered from their fright, they made after him, but he had vanished in the semi-darkness. In the meantime the door of the bedroom had been broken in, and lying on the bed was found the lifeless body of old Righter, with an indescribably sweet smile upon his distorted face.

BOONEVILLE CAMP MEETING.

FOR several days the livery stables of Lock Haven had been wearing an air of great activity. Long rows of newly washed buggies and surreys stood in front of the stables, while hostlers ran about grooming horses, polishing harness and beating lap robes.

If you asked the half-grown colored boy, leading a rawboned caricature of a horse up and down the stable alley, the cause of these extraordinary preparations, he would reply: "Booneville Camp's a Sunday."

Although Booneville is fully fifteen miles from Lock Haven, nearly every member of the population able to hire or borrow a "rig" makes the journey to the Camp Grounds, across the dusty mountain roads.

We entered the "office" of the aforementioned livery stable, a rough board partitioned room, the walls decorated with framed colored prints of three famous horses of the past, Abdallah, George Wilkes and the Byerly Turk, and left our order for "a first-class team" for Sunday morning.

Camp Meeting Sunday proved typical of the month of August. At eight o'clock, when we started, not a breeze was coming from the mountains, and our "first-class turn-out" was of the usual description —two long, bony, gray nags, smothered in a profusion of fly nets, hooked to a low-geared buggy.

Driving along the broad turnpike leading from town to the mountains, we overtook numerous teams bound in the same direction. There were surreys loaded down with stout families and heavy lunch baskets, the horses steaming with perspiration from their unnatural loads; young men driving buggies, accompanied by the inevitable "young ladies they kept company with;" half-drunken country sports lashing delivery wagon horses in borrowed carriages, and old ladies in phaetons, going to see the great preacher from Mifflinburg, each equipage followed by an indescribable canine and a cloud of dust.

We reached the gap in the mountains, where the stony road was cut out of the mountain side, below which a roaring stream flowed, and began a continual ascent for five miles.

Looking back, we could see several turn-outs already played out, the men walking, the women peering out anxiously, while the perspiring beasts tugged up the hills.

As for the young men with the "young ladies they kept company with," they had stopped in the shade by the springs gurgling from the mountain sides, for they certainly were in no hurry!

Here and there we passed a farmhouse or bark peeler's shanty, with empty bark wagons by the road-side, but all evidences of habitation missing, every-one having gone to Camp Meeting. Even the cabin of Granny McGill, famed as a witch, was deserted, that worthy woman too having joined the band of worshippers for the day.

When the summit was reached, and the rushing stream and slashings left behind, we touched up our horses and flew through a bit of farming country, where the air blew in strong gusts, and sheep grazed by the "stake and rider" fences, and by log farm-houses, with barns decorated with bear paws nailed to the gables.

Again we enter the hemlock forest, following the path of a black creek as far as the Sulphur Springs, where before us lay a view of the beautiful Sugar Valley, cultivated halfway to the summits of the opposite range of hills, from its very center rising the three church spires of Loganton, and down the valley we could make out the little village of Booneville, where the Camp Meeting is held.

The hot sun shines on the slate roof of the Logan House, the only hotel in Loganton, kept by the affable Harry Cole, where we stable our horses and get lunch before going to the Camp Grounds.

Already a large crowd of mountaineers, old and young, had collected around the hotel to "see the rigs come in." There was "Clem" Herlacher, the local barber, just back from six months as cowboy in Texas, his jet black hair hanging on his shoulders, his face hidden by a large sombrero, the center of admiration from the country boys. Sam Motter, the hunter, stands by his wagon telling the bystanders how he killed the young bear which lies on the straw in the wagon box. Old John Dice, the witch doctor,

at heart an unbeliever in any form of superstition, is recounting miraculous experiences to Tom Miller, pseudo-inventor of a scheme for perpetual motion. Lewis Geyer, eighty-one years old, once a Forester for the King of Prussia, is swapping war stories with "Black Headed" Bill Williams, who claims to have originated the Bucktail Regiment. On a rocking-chair on the hotel porch sits Maud, the barmaid, a survival of the ancient custom, who on week days dispenses Muncy Valley whiskey and port wine to thirsty travellers, but to-day is surrounded by half a dozen young blonde giants with heavy shoes laced up to their knees, who have come in from a "bark job" on Cherry Run.

The dust on the highways grows thicker as scores of mountaineers from distant settlements drive past the hotel on their way to the Camp Grounds.

Every conceivable kind of equipage is represented. A big horse harnessed beside a pony, spring wagons with wheels that do not match, reins and bridles of rope, dilapidated carryalls, farm wagons covered with straw and crowded with children, and

most wonderful of all, a one-seated carryall with a cradle rocking to and fro in the back, wherein lay a sleeping infant, almost hidden by mosquito netting.

A boy on horseback, the bridle with blinkers and checkrein, stops at the hotel and is immediately swallowed up by the crowd of loungers. He brings news that the livery 'bus from Lock Haven has broken down somewhere in the mountains, about five miles from Loganton, tumbling men and women and precious cases of bottled beer on the roadside. But before one can learn what is to be done for the unfortunates, Elmer Kastetter, the stable boy, has brought out our team from the barn. Our start is just in time to encounter two mountain boys racing their buggies. Crossing a narrow bridge they came together with a crash, spokes, shafts, harness and whips flew in every direction, and the fickle crowd abandoned speculating on a far away breakdown, and rushed down the road en masse to the scene of this fresh disaster.

Driving through the bed of the stream, we get by the pile of scrap iron and kindling wood, and

although blinded and choked by dust and almost wrecked by racing teams, we at last drive down the steep hill into the Camp Grounds.

Fully five thousand people are assembled in the grove of gigantic hemlocks, either strolling about under the trees, eating from copious lunch baskets, or listening to the black-bearded preacher from Mifflinburg, whose voice resounds like a sledge and anvil.

A thousand horses, most of them with their heads stuck in feed bags, are tied to trees and fences.

Elk Creek, a limestone stream, has dried up and hundreds of children are playing on its rocky bed.

Country boys, with wide-brimmed straw hats, red neckties and green and yellow barred bicycle stockings, arm in arm with red-cheeked, white-dressed girls, walk unceasingly up and down the avenue in the center of the park. The tintype tent, kept by an old gypsy woman, is surrounded by a laughing crowd, who guy the boys as they come out after having their sweethearts' pictures taken. But the calm of the scene is rudely interrupted by a tow-haired bicyclist, wearing a red jockey cap, and, of

course, the green, orange-barred stockings, who, in riding down the hill to the grounds, coasted off the bridge into the dry stream, and crawls up the bank cut and bleeding. A few minutes later the eyes of thousands are turned to a horse which has broken loose, and, dragging a buggy, dashes through the grove, ripping off wheels in its way until its wild course is brought to an end by running into a tree, smashing the buggy to splinters.

And thus the happy Sunday passes, the day gradually softening into night with no signs of the vast concourse departing homeward. Kerosene torches, fastened to the trees, give the woods a weird appearance, the flickering light shining on the strong, pious faces of the worshippers, singing, "I'm on my way to Zion, I'm on my journey home."

Not until a thousand silver watches have noted the hour of ten and the giant, black-bearded minister has pronounced the benediction, does the homeward march begin; the neighing of horses, rattling of wagons, and the roar of joyous voices making a strange contrast to the stillness of the countryside.

Everyone is talking of the events of the day. Everyone is happy. Truly the Sunday at Booneville Camp Meeting is to these people what Christmas, Easter, Birthday, Fourth of July and Derby Day rolled into one, would be to us, so important a place does it fill in reckoning the life of the Pennsylvania mountaineer.

FANNY HEDDEN'S HOTEL

TO anyone finding himself with a spare day on his hands, and the ability of getting to Watsontown, there is no pleasanter way of putting in that day than to drive through the beautiful valley to McEwansville, Turbotville and Washingtonville.

It was my privilege to have taken this drive one sunshiny April morning, just when the pale green leaves and vari-colored blossoms were budding forth, and the air was sweet with the odor of the grass. Myriads of robins, bluebirds and meadow larks were warbling in the brushwoods, and the roosters by the roadside gave vent to their Spring-rejuvenated crowing. The ducks were taking their first swim in the brown, muddy mill ponds.

The broad farming valley stretched out like an English landscape, the cultivated fields alternating with groves of stately oaks or hickories, and dotted here and there were the substantial white farm-

houses, in whose front yards flourished the tall but alien Norway spruces.

Quiet reigned in the streets of McEwansville, with its tall spired gothic churches, and rows of little stores, with show windows of small paned glass. And likewise in Turbotville were the streets deserted, except at the huge white public house, where several idlers sat on the porch in the morning sun, waiting for some stranger to treat them to their favorite drinks. We passed the scene of a recent conflagration, where one-third of the peaceful old-fashioned street, and the friendly shade trees, had been swept away by the uncontrollable flames. New frame houses were being erected, but they were narrow and shallow, painted yellow and blue, in unfavorable contrast to the low-roofed comfortable dwellings they pretended to replace.

Once more out in the country we followed the winding turnpike, over bridges which rattled as we crossed, by ancient cemeteries, with gothic monuments and decaying cedar trees, and past fields sprouting with lawn-like wheat. And when we

crossed a little stream, whose bed was shaded by untrimmed willow trees, we found ourselves in another village of the past, Washingtonville.

The little white houses stood flush upon the street, which led up to a hill crowned by several good sized churches. In the center of the town was "Fanny Hedden's Hotel," built, like the other structures, close upon the road, but differing from them in having two tiers of balcony-like porches, where guests could sit and watch the doings of the town and wait for fresh travellers to arrive. Before this old-time hostlery we stopped. A half-grown stable boy held our horse, while a thickset young man ran out and greeted us obsequiously with a decided British accent, as you would expect to be met with in the taverns we read about in rural England. But when the stable boy addressed him as Mr. Herzog, I knew it was only a case of the adaptability of the Pennsylvania Dutchman who had lived in foreign lands.

We were ushered into the low ceilinged office, the walls of which I was surprised to find covered

with old colored prints depicting scenes in American sporting and political life as it was sixty years ago. And there was one print which was clearly not American—"King William at the Battle of the Boyne."

While we registered, a country boy came in and tacked up dodgers which announced a "Dance at Jerseytown, Friday night," and I sincerely wished I could remain long enough to attend this function. I made the country gallant's acquaintance, and he showed me a strange medal or button he had found the day previous while helping demolish an old house. Apparently of silver, the size of a modern dollar, the medal had a head of Washington in the center, with the motto, "We uphold our President," beneath, and around the edges were the letters, V., M., N.Y., C., R.I., N.J., N.H., D., M., V., N.C., S. C., G., which I interpreted to be the initials of the thirteen original states. There were two small holes in the center which inclined me to believe this curious relic had been used as a button. "I wouldn't take a dollar for it," said the country boy as he went away.

Dinner was quickly prepared and we ascended the narrow stairway to the dining room. At the door we were met by a smiling old woman, Fanny Hedden herself, who confesses eighty years, but looks and acts thirty years younger. The dining room was a spacious apartment, the long windows and high ceilings being a decided change from the low rooms on the ground floor. In a corner was a walnut sideboard of antique design, and the walls were decorated by five or six engravings of Biblical scenes. The table was lavishly set with every conceivable variety of preserves and relishes, and by our plates were tall cut-glass goblets. Mrs. Hedden and her grandson, for such the young landlord proved to be, both apologized for their inability to provide for us properly, which inability we failed to see. While her grandson was filling our glasses with sparkling homemade wine, which he proudly declared "was made of the grapes from the arbor on the back porch," we commented on the Biblical engravings which were on the walls. Mrs. Hedden, noticing that we were interested in curiosities, hurried from the room and brought in

a woven basket of immense dimensions which she said was made by her grandmother, and was over a hundred and fifty years old. "And it's as good as ever," said the old woman, as she poured the contents of the ice water pitcher into the basket, which did not leak a drop.

After finishing the appetizing repast we were conducted to the parlor "to see some more old pictures," as Mrs. Hedden expressed it. In the parlors I noticed a Canadian scene, which led me to suspect that it was in that country Mr. Herzog acquired his English manner of speaking. But most remarkable of all, three life-size portraits of handsome women, two blondes and one brunette, in the decollete garb of 1860, hung in this room, but Mrs. Hedden could give no clew as to the identity of the persons they represented, as she had "bought them at a bargain from a retired boarding house keeper in Philadelphia, Centennial year." As the classic faces of these long-forgotten charmers smiled from their tarnished frames, I wondered where the originals could be, whether living or dead, after the long lapse of years!

After inspecting the various bedrooms, in one of which we found engravings of nymphs and shepherdesses evidently dating back to the eighteenth century, and expressing our satisfaction at the courteous treatment accorded us, we ordered our horse and buggy, and after paying our bill sped away toward the deer park of Congressman Billmeyer, which is not a mile distant from Fanny Hedden's Hotel.

SUNRISE AT NORTH BEND

FAR out on the summits of the mountains back of North Bend is a colony of Swedenborgians, who have come from the crowded cities to indulge in their mystic faith and build up an agricultural community. They have cleared off the pine forests, built comfortable homes and roomy barns, and produced a flowering oasis in this abandoned wilderness. Whether their farming venture will prove an ultimate success in this inaccessible spot remains to be seen, but one thing is certain, they have selected the grandest site in the state for the location of their settlement. High above the other mountains, commanding a superb view of the surrounding country, and in an atmosphere that is always dry and cool, even in midsummer, they are to be envied by their less fortunate neighbors in the river valleys. But the attraction of which they are most proud, and justly so, is the marvelous sunrise to which all strangers with a love for the wonders of nature are treated.

One evening, several Summers ago, I climbed the steep mountains to the settlement, and spent the night at one of the hospitable Swedenborgian homesteads. Before daybreak I was wakened and given an opportunity to view this grand and unparalleled sight. From our mountain I looked off in every direction and beheld a remarkable phenomenon of the mountain peaks breaking through the white clouds, like islands in some trackless sea! And then in the east the faint line of the rising sun grew wider, and redder, and more effulgent every minute, lighting the entire sky with its blaze of fiery glory. The clouds receded from the mountain peaks, opening a wider and wider panorama in their furrowed rows of darkest green. And from purple to red, and from red to orange and yellow, the sun overspread until the restless shadows on the road before me betokened the glorious birth of a new day!

CORNPLANTER'S RING

WHILE inspecting the wonderful collection of Indian and other relics in the possession of Dr. Gurnard of Muncy, I was shown a curious ring made by Chief Cornplanter on the occasion of his last visit to the Muncy Valley. For a long while after his relegation to a New York State Reservation the famous Indian was in the habit of paying a yearly visit to the Muncy Valley, where he was well treated by the descendents of the first settlers. Among these were the Stover family, who did everything in their power to make his sojourns comfortable.

In 1835, Cornplanter, being over ninety years of age and growing feeble, felt that he would probably never be able to repeat his annual pilgrimage, and wished to remember the people who had entertained him so hospitably. The day before he started for the Reservation he asked Mr. Stover for two new twenty-five cent pieces, which were fortunately provided. From one he cut out the center, forming a

ring, on which he soldered the other quarter, so as to show the face and date, "1835."

The aged chief's prediction proved true, for he died before the year was out. The ring has since passed through various hands, but in the appreciative ownership of Dr. Gurnard it remains as an interesting proof of the date of Cornplanter's last visit to the scenes of his youth.

THE HAUNTED TAVERN

AT the approach of evening a heavy fog arose, making the navigation of the timber rafts a difficulty in the "big river." The mountainous shores were completely veiled from sight, as were even the lights in the cottage windows of Liverpool. Big rain drops pattered, waves washed over the rafts, and the logs creaked and slapped in the uncertain current.

The steersmen lit their watch-lights and called aloud their warnings to prevent collisions, and vainly looked about for places of refuge until morning.

On a raft of spars, bound for Marietta, were two brothers, Jacob and Richie Vail, who, although they had been rivermen all their lives, were a trifle apprehensive on this occasion. The current and fog had forced them close to shore, and as they beat around for a comfortable eddy, they noticed a big building loom out through the darkness on a neck of land which ran out into the river. To this they steered,

made fast, and abandoned the raft for the night. No lights shone in the barred windows of this house, but nevertheless the brothers knocked at the door. To their surprise it was instantly opened by a young woman who, as she stood there shading the candle with her hand, produced an impression on them which they never forgot. Of medium height, with straight, black hair and pallid face, she had one pale blue eye while the other was brown. Her countenance was withal peculiarly attractive. When she heard their predicament, she invited them in, explaining her house was a raftsman's tavern.

Richie, who was somewhat of "a ladies' man," inquired if she had a male companion in the enterprise, to which the young woman replied she had been alone since her husband died two years since.

After supper, Jacob, feeling very tired, asked to be shown to his room, while Richie declared he would like to "keep company" with the young widow by the fireside.

The room in which Jacob was domiciled for the night was of large size, and the one chair, washstand,

and long-legged bed seemed diminutive in comparison. There was no loft above, and the square-hewn rafters and arched roof, through which the rain leaked, was like the haymow of a barn rather than a bedroom.

The woman handed him her candle, said good-night, and as he undressed, he could hear the buzz of her conversation with Richie. He blew out the candle and climbed into the long-legged bed, and covered himself with two or three patchwork quilts, in preparation for the much needed sleep. But in less than five minutes he was rudely disturbed. First one quilt, then the second, then the third was pulled from him by unseen hands, and thrown in a heap in the furthermost corner of the room. He looked up, thinking it some joke of Richie's, but could see no one. He jumped from the bed, got the comforters and recovered himself, only to have them seized again. A third time he regained his coverings, and held on to them with his stoutest grip, but was powerless to prevent their removal. He ran over to the washstand and groped about for matches to light

his candle, but there were none to be found. As he started for the door to call for help unseen hands hurled him across the room, where he struck the wall with a terrific thud. The more he struggled, the more he was forced against the wall, as if held there by a hurricane. His clothes were thrown from the chair and lay in disorder on the floor, and in his helplessness his watch was lifted from under the pillow and he could hear the crystal shatter as it smashed against the rafters. His cries for help brought Richie and the woman to the door, but they were unable to open it, although there was no key in the lock. They hammered and banged on the door, while poor Jacob was held tight by his invisible tormenter. Suddenly the door flew open, Richie and his companion were hurled upon the floor, Jacob fell in a limp mass, and the comforters whisked across the room and readjusted themselves upon the bed. Richie's lantern was extinguished in the excitement, but all hands found their way to the stairs and fled from the bewitched apartment. Once downstairs, the woman tried her utmost to coax the raftsmen to

remain, promising them better quarters, but they cursed the tavern and its devilish occupants, and in the uncertain haze of dawn hurried to the water's edge and loosened the raft from its moorings.

At their next stop they met a gang of raftsmen who laughed when informed of the awful night's experience. "Why, that's the 'hanted' tavern," they exclaimed, "that woman's husband, two raftsmen and an Irishman were murdered in that room at a dance two years ago, and from that time there's been some hellish happenings in that big room under the roof, and it's pretty certain that one night is all you'll want to spend in it."

The unsavory reputation of the log tavern spread to the entire rafting fraternity, and the odd-eyed young woman was forced to abandon the premises for lack of custom. For a number of years the structure was unoccupied, and latterly was used for a cow stable, until the '89 flood carried it away.

THE STORY OF ALTAR ROCK

IN the first quarter of the Eighteenth Century several bands of French trappers found their way from the trading posts on Lake Erie to the Driftwood branch of the Sinnemahoning. They followed this stream to the main run, where some of them went out the Clearfield branch toward Benezet, while another party of five built a camp and stockade on a high point at the great bend west of what is now Round Island Station. The camp, which was christened Grande Pointe, and even the subsequent history of these French pioneers has faded into oblivion, although to this day the foundations can be located in the pine forest which has since grown up on the scene of this ancient fortification.

The French policy with the Indians was to fraternize and to be honorable in all dealings with them, and for this reason their trading and trapping enterprises were eminently successful.

However, some few of the young bucks resented

the intrusion of the whites, especially after the building of the Grande Pointe camp, which seemed to insure their permanent residence in the locality. But the squaws and less warlike of the braves, who bartered furs for hitherto undreamed of fineries and satisfying stimulants, were glad of their presence in the neighborhood.

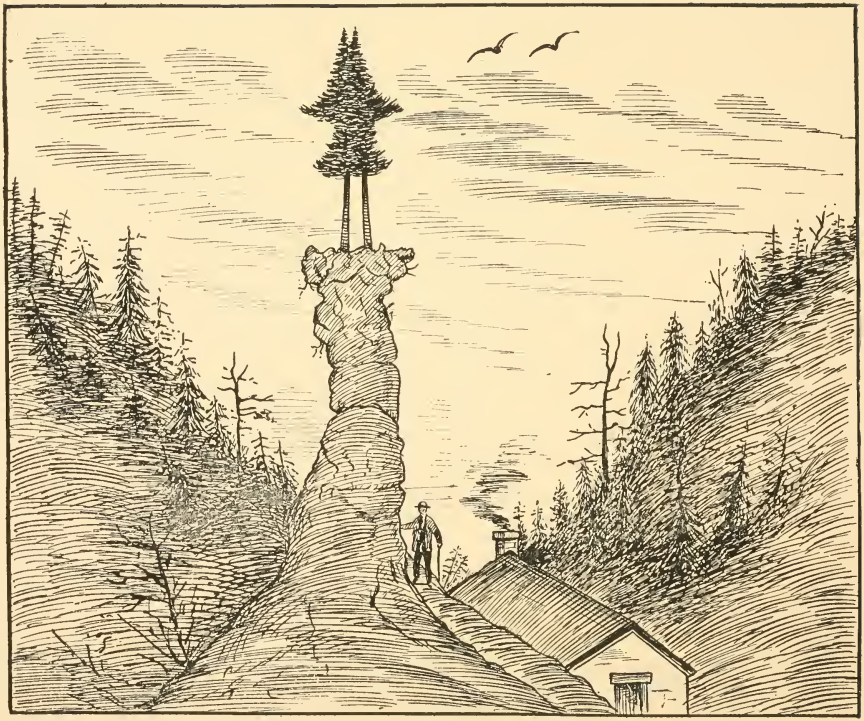
Of all the hostile braves, none cherished a more bitter and uncompromising hate than did the tall, spare, young soothsayer, whose name translated is equivalent to Two Pines.

He was a medicine man by descent, and in his frequent visions he saw nothing but frightful omens of his people's annihilation at the hands of the pale-faced strangers. Still, the greed for bargain and luxury was too strong in the majority of the tribe to give but a passing thought to predictions that at another time would have been instantly heeded. They turned away, shaking their heads, when on festal days he mounted the Altar Rock for devotions, where sacrifices were offered, and commune with the spirits held, and on whose narrow ledge an Indian

was supposed to possess a charmed life and be for the time invulnerable to poisoned arrows or javelins.

Altar Rock, which modern writers call Pulpit Rock, High Rock, Steeple Rock and Nelson's Rock, is one of the most remarkable natural wonders in the State of Pennsylvania. Its diameter in no part being over ten feet, it rises like a graceful column to the height of sixty feet, where it is surmounted by a flat slab whose dimensions are approximately twelve by ten feet. The entire cliff is composed of brownstone, and is undulated and fluted by the action of water in past ages. On the top of the flat slab stands a living white pine, forty feet tall, whose gnarled roots clutch at the rocks in a grim effort to hold its place against the onslaught of the elements.

There is no earth on Altar Rock from which the tree can gain sustenance, but it grows healthy and green in its barren home. Until five years ago there was a second white pine, the exact counterpart of its mate, growing on the rock, but it was struck by lightning, lifted bodily from the roots and hurled into the valley below.



ALTAR ROCK

It was one bright September morning, after Two Pines, the soothsayer, had spent the night on the top of Altar Rock in meditation and prayer, that he heard the crack of a gun fired somewhere near the Sinnemahoning. A few minutes later he came face to face with a Frenchman, Pierre Le Brun, dragging the carcass of a bull elk to the river's edge, to sink it until he might have time to prepare it for eating. Two Pines' anger was thoroughly aroused. To see this intruder killing the beasts of the forest, which belonged, in his idea, to the Indian race, was too much for him, and he struck the Frenchman a terrific blow on the head with his stone mallet, crushing his skull and causing instant death. Then he reclimbed to his retreat on the Altar Rock, and prayed rapturously for the gift of strength to annihilate the white beings who defiled the valley of the Sinnemahoning.

It was in this attitude of prayer that he heard footsteps and whispering voices in the woods beneath. Nearer and nearer they came, until through the leaves he beheld, to his satisfaction, the forms of four French trappers, heavily armed. Two Pines arose

and stood erect, in the dignity of his Titan stature, and with arms folded across his breast, seemed to defy the avengers to slay him on his immortal pedestal, where poisoned arrows and javelins had less effect then drops of Summer rain.

A little Frenchman, named Lafitte, leaned his heavy gun upon a snag, took careful aim and fired at the defiant warrior. There was a loud report, and when the foul-smelling smoke had cleared, the dead body of Two Pines lay upon the Altar Rock.

An hour later the Frenchmen abandoned Grande Pointe with its valuable stores, and started down stream in canoes. That night the camp was looted and burned by the Indians, and whether the trappers succeeded in reaching a friendly refuge or were murdered on the way has never yet been ascertained. But from the flat top of Altar Rock two little pines sprouted slender and straight, with long silky needles. Taller and taller they grew, until, side by side, with their smooth barked trunks and shapely tangle of dark green foliage, they resembled the figure of an Indian youth, the slain but defiant Two Pines.

THE TRAGEDY OF HIGH ROCKS

WHERE the McElhattan and Spring Runs come together in a turbulent medley of bubbling ripples, and birches and quaking asps thrive, where the forests of evergreens once prevailed, there rises a perpendicular cliff of yellow, uneven stone to the altitude of eight hundred feet. The sides are so steep that the few stunted trees stand out horizontally. On the top of the forbidding bluff, which is dubbed by the mountaineers the High Rocks, a grove of pitch pines flourishes, which in days gone by sheltered the Indian councils held on this natural fortress. Here it was that the powerful chief, Ho-non-waw, would sit on every clear morning, smoking his twisted pipe, and dream of perpetual victories. And here also the Indian signal fires blazed forth when the relentless race war was raging between white man and red.

In the peaceful lowlands, a couple of miles from the High Rocks, Israel Snyder, a young pio-

neer, had built a cabin and cleared a few acres of the dark, rich soil. With his wife and three small children he was perfectly content, and refused to be drawn into the disputes between the settlers and the Aborigines. Frequently the Indians came to his cabin door to have their knives sharpened or to buy small lots of ammunition, and he seemed to be living among them on terms of honest peace. In the last months of Summer young Snyder would be gone from home a day at a time on hunting expeditions, as he wished to lay in a stock of dried venison for the Winter. He always left a loaded gun with his wife in case of unexpected attack, but there really appeared to be no use for such precautions.

But one night, when he returned from a successful chase, he perceived that the door was wide open and no fire threw out its glow from the hearth. Inside the door lay the body of his wife, shot through the head (with perhaps the very ammunition he had sold the redskins) and scalped. The children were gone, carried off by the cruel savages. The heart-broken pioneer, in the presence of God and the stars,

vowed he would avenge the devastation of his home, and from a peaceful builder of a homestead he became a merciless enemy of the Indians, joining the Brady brothers in many skirmishes of the most desperate kind. Six months after the death of his wife he had killed eleven Indians, including Sa-lon-ka, son of Chief Ho-non-waw, and his ambition would have no rest until he had slaughtered the great chief himself. From a distance he had seen Ho-non-waw smoking on the High Rocks, but to approach him was no easy matter, as Indian pickets swarmed about the approaches to the mountain.

He knew that if he shot at one of these scouts whom he might meet on his way to the chief's retreat, it would bring the others to him, so he decided to make the climb unarmed, save for a hunting knife. Stealthily he passed several sentries unnoticed, and onward and upward he crawled on the far side of the rocks, until daylight found him on the level bench, where he lay in a thicket of hogberries until the dignified chief strode to his favorite ledge and sat down to smoke his twisted pipe. The time had come!

Springing from his concealment, Snyder rushed up behind his foe and gave him a mighty shove. There was crunching of gravel, a tearing of garments, and as Ho-non-waw fell from the cliff, with diabolical presence of mind he seized the leg of the pioneer, and together they went down, down, eight hundred feet, tumbling over each other, and lit with a crash in the topmost branches of a chestnut tree. The Indians soon discovered their loss, and reverently removed the chieftain's body and gave it burial. But as for Israel Snyder, his bones were left to bleach and crumble in the chestnut tree.

THE LAST ELK

THE recent stocking of the Ozchinachson deer park with elk recalls the fact that until a little more than thirty years ago these noble animals ranged in a wild state in Pennsylvania. Long after they had become but vague memories in the other eastern states, they resisted extirmination in their final stronghold.

The honor, as sportsmen would regard it, of having killed the last elk in Pennsylvania has, after so many years, not yet been awarded, as claimants for this distinction appear about every other year; and if these claims proved true it would bring the death of the last elk down to a comparatively recent period. In some quarters, the venerable hunter, Seth Nelson, who was born the same year as Gladstone and Lincoln, in 1809, and from last reports is hale and hearty, is said to have shot an elk in Cameron County in the Fall of 1867. But another famous hunter and highly esteemed gentleman, the late

James David, is known to have killed one of these animals in 1870. Between these two dates several other claimants have appeared, but an unprejudiced judge of the situation must discard their statements as not proven.

Early in the Spring of 1872 some fishermen on Wyckoff's Run found the bones of three cow elks. Judging from the teeth they were very old, and had evidently died from hunger and exposure.

In 1880, one Moses Reed, a professional hunter from Clearfield County, confided to his friends that he had killed an elk at the head of Mix Run, and even showed a set of antlers as evidence. But an express agent exploded his story by relating how the imaginative hunter had recently received a fine set of elk-horns from someone in Colorado, who afterward turned out to be Reed's nephew.

In this connection it is interesting to learn that as recently as 1900 ex-County Surveyor, Flavius J. David, of Lock Haven, a son of the late James David, found a large elk-horn lying in the woods in Potter County. It had been badly scorched by forest fires

and had evidently lain there a long while, but it vividly brought back the time when they were monarchs of our forests. And it is also worth the knowing that although the elk is admittedly extinct in Pennsylvania, the game laws "permit the hunting of elk and deer from November first to December first," perhaps in the hope that some day they will return to their native heath! As for the deer, they are plentiful enough, their smaller size and agility having given them opportunities for escape while the cumbersome elk were not so gifted.

I have seen the elk in the several preserves in the state where they are now kept, but they are practically domesticated and more like contented cattle than game animals. They are fond of sun baths, and when on their feet stand by the feed boxes with eyes blinking and half closed.

In the Adirondack mountains of New York there are at least a dozen parks stocked with elk, and in New England several preserves are well filled with them. In the Adirondacks the principal interest of sportsmen is to restock the forests with moose, which

L. of C.

once came from Canada in considerable numbers. And while this is being argued pro and con, it is a wonder that no one has suggested the restocking of the woods of Pennsylvania with elk, for I really believe that there is a better chance for elk to live and breed in these highlands than for moose to thrive in New York State, where a day's travel brings one in contact with numerous wired enclosures, Summer hotels and cottages, so uncongenial to the lover of the untrammeled wilds.

But if we did restock our mountains with the lordly elk, it would be but for a short time, as the railroads, tramways and mines, which are constantly opening in every wooded gorge, have sealed the fate of Pennsylvania as a sportsman's paradise, and in the future it will be to the game preserve, and not to the trackless forest, where we must look for what will be at best a poor imitation of "sport."

THE GHOST WALK

IN a dilapidated log farmhouse in the White Deer Valley resides an aged hermit, whose Scotch-Irish name I shall slightly alter, as he is still living, and call him Silas McKean. Fifty-five years ago he was the dashing son of one of the most prosperous farmers of the valley, but now, alone and friendless, he ekes out an existence from his deteriorated farm land.

A kindly old man is Silas McKean, but his mind, long focused on a single thought, has made him an uninteresting companion to the neighboring agriculturists who find him an unresponsive listener to their stories of crops, and horses, and guns and politics. But to a stranger, who will enter into the spirit of the old man, and assent, not differ from his metaphysical imaginings, he is a strange combination of scientific knowledge and illogical stubbornness. With his parents he had moved to his present abode during the year 1846, when the hilly sides of the

valley were in timber, and had helped his father and brothers clear a good-sized farm and erect a substantial farmhouse and barns. He was then a stalwart, red-cheeked boy, fond of taking the country girls "to meeting," and the best horseman for miles around.

Back of the red bank-barn, which he aided to build, stood two gigantic white pines, which had been left to shade the watering trough until two young maples they had planted reached sufficient size, for it is a peculiar fact that the Pennsylvania farmer has a prejudice against the native pines, but will preserve the most miserable maple or pin oak for shade or ornament.

One night the McKean's sheep did not come in from the mountain and Silas mounted his buckskin stallion and went in search of them. Far off among the hills he found them, and it was past eleven o'clock when he finally had them safely corralled in the sheepyard. He had put his horse away and was going to the house when he noticed a peculiar ball of white light dancing in mid-air between the two old pines. He stopped to watch the phenom-

enon, which gradually elongated until it assumed the form of a young girl of supernatural beauty. The spectre remained motionless and seemed to catch the eye of Silas, who remained transfixed to the spot. Then it slowly walked to one tree, touched it with one hand, then to the other tree and repeated the performance, and in a moment more resumed the shape of a ball of white light—and disappeared!

Silas was amazed by what he had seen, but kept it a secret from the family. The next night at the same hour he crept from the house to the watering trough, when the apparition appeared and vanished exactly as the night before.

Night after night Silas watched the spot, fascinated by the beauty and mystery of the phantom, until his father demanded the cause of his unseemly conduct. After several stormy scenes he confessed, much to the indignation of his orthodox parent, who refused to believe the story unless he should see it with his own eyes. He accompanied his son to the ghost walk, but next morning he could not be induced to say whether or not he had seen anything

remarkable. But one thing was certain; after breakfast, despite his son's entreaties, he chopped down both the grand old pines and ordered them cut into kindling wood. To Silas this was an act of desecration, and he shed tears as he dragged the shaggy boughs to the brush heap.

When night came he resumed his watch by the stumps, from which the red pitch was oozing like blood. But alas! no phantom appeared. The hours passed wearily, morning came, but everything was matter-of-fact. On each successive night he was in his usual place, but not a ray of hope was in store.

Before a year had elapsed he began to act queerly. He neglected his work, muttered to himself; and thought only of the night, when he could sit on the dug-out water trough waiting for his ghostly love.

Years went by; his parents died, his brothers and sisters moved west, but he remained. His old friends regarded him as crazy and young people coming home from church at night feared to pass him, sitting motionless by the rotting pine stumps.

But loss of friends and reputation could not shake his faith, and to the present time he waits and hopes for the return of his spectre sweetheart.

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